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NOTES AND FRAGMENTS.

THE CONVENTION OF 1836.—[The following letter well depicts the stress and excitement under which the first constitution of Texas was wrought out. Martin Parmer (or Palmer, as the copyist incorrectly spells it) was a member of the Convention which met at Washington, March 1, 1836, and declared Texas independent on the 2d. The work of the convention thereafter was the framing of the constitution, which was finished on the 17th. Johnson's command, to which the writer refers, was attacked by General Urrea at San Patricio on February 27, and only five escaped; Grant's small force was massacred on March 2, the day of the declaration of independence; and Travis fell in the Alamo the day the letter was written. The letter is from a copy published in the *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock), April 5, 1836. There is a file for that year in the Library of Congress.—EUGENE C. BARKER.]

Committee Room, Washington,
March 6, 1836.

Dear Wife—I am well, and we are getting along very well. We have three or four committees who are preparing a constitution and we will soon have it ready. I shall be at home in ten or fifteen days. We have alarming news continually from the west; Frank Johnson's division is all killed but five, it is supposed. We saw [*sic*] two shot begging for quarters. Dr. Grant with a company of men is supposed to be all slain. Travis' last express states San Antonio was strongly besieged; it is much feared that Travis and company is all massacred, as despatches from that place have been due three days and none have arrived yet. The frontiers are breaking up, Gonzales must be sacked, and its inhabitants murdered and defiled without they get immediate aid. The last accounts the Mexicans were to a considerable number between Gonzales and San Antonio. Fanning is at La Bahia with about 500 men, and is in daily expectation of a visit from Santa Anna. Texas has been declared free and independent, but unless we have a general turn out, and every man lay his helping hand too, we are lost. Santa Anna and his vassals are now on the borders, and the declaration of our freedom, unless it is sealed with blood, is of no force. I say again that nothing will save Texas but a general turn out. You all know my views with regard to our condition, I have

given you facts, judge for yourselves. I wish a copy of this letter sent immediately to Capt. Baily Anderson and Col. A. S. Sublett, and publicly read in St. Augustine. Travis closes his last expresses with these words, "Help, O my country."

Martin Palmer [Parmer].

To the Committee of Vigilance and Safety,¹
San Augustine, Texas.

¹The letter originally written to Mrs. Parmer was no doubt sent to St. Augustine to be publicly read, as he requested, hence this inscription.